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Celebrity Chef Gets Connected - 24/08/2010

Norfolk pub and restaurant owner Chris Coubrough's business continues to flourish and now he's addressed one of his biggest bugbears.

"When customers visit our establishments I want them to have the full attention of my staff. I don't want them having to wait for my staff to deal with phone calls or trying to sort out administration. I want my staff serving the guests and providing them with an experience that they'll want to repeat."

Chris knew what he wanted to achieve but wasn't sure how to go about it. He wanted to streamline his administration, ensure calls were answered and dealt with professionally, and maximise his booking potential. He wanted to connect his four sites so they could make the best use of shared resources. He approached Norwich based Eastern Voice & Data and after initial discussions asked them to design a communications network to help take his business forward.

Eastern Voice & Data Managing Director Russell Marriott explained the challenge that Mr Coubrough set them: "Achieving the connectivity and streamlining between sites that Chris was asking for was a real challenge. The most practical way to connect the sites together is by the use of broadband, but as we all know, Norfolk is not blessed with the best broadband particularly when you want to use it for voice traffic. Chris' restaurants are in very beautiful and remote locations, which add to the difficulties. But we were delighted to be set the challenge and were determined to show that Norfolk based skills and knowledge could provide a workable solution".

Eastern consulted with the Hunstanton based broadband and line provider Swains plc. Between them a broadband network was designed that enabled the establishments in Wells, East Rudham, Letheringsett and Brancaster to be connected with high quality links. Mr. Marriott comments: "We had to find reliable broadband products that would give a high quality experience, with Swain's expert assistance we've achieved exactly that. We connected to the latest Panasonic IP telephone systems we provided at each location to give a true VOIP network.

What we've managed to achieve is speech quality on the network that is indistinguishable from landline quality."

The network has allowed Mr Coubrough's business to maximise bookings, share resources, and streamline administration enabling decisions to be made more quickly.

"What this network has meant is that my serving staff can get on with doing the job they are employed to do giving guests their full attention, which is how it should be. This was what I wanted to be the end result. Calls are dealt with more efficiently and our administration has been improved significantly."

There has also been an interesting side effect that Mr.Coubrough points out: "Because the calls between the sites are free we encourage the staff to discuss improvements and experiences. The ability to communicate gives a real team spirit so that although we're operating in different buildings we're all pulling together."

Russell Marriott summed up, "I'm delighted that Chris has seen real business benefits as a result of him having the foresight to invest in a network of this type.

Efficient communication is at the heart of every successful business and I'm pleased that he chose Norfolk based expertise to provide the solution to his requirements. Broadband in Norfolk is not all bad news; the technology can be harnessed to provide real improvements allowing businesses to embrace the benefits that are there. Flying Kiwi Inns have demonstrated that admirably."



Chris Coubrough

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Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>			51%
No	<input type="checkbox"/>			43%
Why Not!?	<input type="checkbox"/>			6%